<u>Listing of Claims:</u>

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-43 (canceled)

Claims 45-54 (canceled)

55. (new) A system comprising:

a user device having a processor and comprising:

a browser program capable of being run on said processor for viewing website pages;

a graphical user interface (GUI) application capable of being run on said processor, containing a proprietary communication protocol and providing a GUI for depicting a character icon; and

a unique identifier for identifying the user of the user device;

a service provider for maintaining a user record corresponding to said user, for communicating with said GUI application by means of said proprietary communication protocol, for authorizing the GUI application to depict the character icon, and for providing one or more previously enabled character enhancements for the user's character icon depicted in the authorized GUI application, wherein said user record comprises identification of the user's character icon, user preferences, and the one or more previously enabled character enhancements; and

a target website for offering a new character enhancement for the user's character icon, wherein the new character enhancement is capable of being enabled in the user's record at the service provider without requiring user interaction with the service provider; and

wherein, when the user visits the target website using the browser program, the target website uses the unique identifier on the user device to access the user's record at the service provider without requiring user interaction with the service provider, whereby any new character enhancement offered to the user is appropriate for the user's character icon.

56. (new) The system of claim 55, wherein the unique identifier comprises a cookie.

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57. (new)   The system of claim 55, wherein the previously enabled character enhancement operates from cache memory in the user device.

58. (new)   The system of claim 55, wherein the new character enhancement operates from cache memory in the user device.

59. (new)   The system of claim 55, wherein the new character enhancement and the previously enabled character enhancement comprise applet programs.

60. (new).   The system of claim 55, wherein the new character enhancement and the previously enabled character enhancement comprise one of abilities, traits and equipment.

61. (new).   The system of claim 55, wherein the service provider provides an Internet location where the user can display the character icon to another user and view a character icon from the other user.

62. (new)   The system of claim 55, wherein the service provider includes means for allowing the user to trade a previously-acquired character enhancement to another user in communication with the service provider.

63. (new)   A method for viewing content over the Internet, comprising the steps of:

providing a user device having a processor, said user device having a browser program capable of being run on said processor for viewing website pages;

activating a graphical user interface (GUI) application on a user device having a browser program capable of being run on a user device processor for viewing website pages on the user device, said GUI application containing a proprietary communication protocol, a unique identifier for identifying the user of the user device, and providing a GUI for depicting a character icon on the user device;

communicating between the user device and a service provider, said service provider maintaining a user record corresponding to said user, for communicating with said GUI application by means of said proprietary communication protocol, for authorizing the GUI

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application to depict the character icon, and for providing one or more previously enabled character enhancements for the user's character icon depicted in the authorized GUI application, wherein said user record comprises identification of the user's character icon, user preferences, and the one or more previously enabled character enhancements;

communicating between the user device and a target website to locate a new character enhancement for the user's character icon;

communicating between a target website and said service provider for offering a new character enhancement for the user's character icon, wherein the new character enhancement is capable of being enabled in the user's record at the service provider without requiring user interaction with the service provider; and

wherein the target website uses the unique identifier to access the user's record at the service provider without requiring user interaction with the service provider, whereby any new character enhancement offered to the user is appropriate for the user's character icon.

64. (new) The method of claim 63, wherein the unique identifier comprises a cookie.

65. (new) The method of claim 63, wherein the previously enabled character enhancement operates from cache memory in the user device.

66. (new) The method of claim 63, wherein the new character enhancement operates from cache memory in the user device.

67. (new) The method of claim 63, wherein the new character enhancement and the previously enabled character enhancement comprise applet programs.

68. (new). The method of claim 63, wherein the new character enhancement and the previously enabled character enhancement comprise one of abilities, traits and equipment.

69. (new). The method of claim 63, further comprising the step of providing the user with an Internet location where the user can display the character icon to another user and view a character icon from the other user.

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70. (new) The method of claim 63, further comprising the step of allowing the user to trade a previously-acquired character enhancement to another user in communication with the service provider.